4¾-Hour BBC Program Finds for Warren Commission

News 1/30/67

LONDON, Jan. 30 (UPI) — Two leading legal authorities, a Briton and an American, agreed today with the Warren Commission's conclusion of no conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy. But the American urged creation of a small, full-time commission to re-examine all evidence.

Prof. Alexander Bickel, professor of law and legal history at Yale University, and Lord Devlin, a former British appeals court judge, also concluded that all evidence indicated Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone killer.

The "verdicts" were delivered early today at the conclusion of an unprecedented four hour, 45-minute TV program probing the circumstances and doubts surrounding the assassination.

An estimated seven million British homes were tuned in to the British Broadcasting Corp. presentation which began yesterday and ran past midnight. Tempers of several participants, who included Atty. Mark Lane and several other Americans, were frayed by tart verbal exchanges.

Mr. Bickel said he was not completely satisfied with the "one-bullet" theory of Mr. Kennedy's death and argued that as long as the slightest doubt remained, "the part of wisdom would be to convene a small, full-time body to look into the evidence again."

The heart of the Warren Commission's conclusions is that a single bullet entered the President's neck from behind, exited from his throat and wounded Texas Gov. John B. Connally, seated in front of Mr. Kennedy in the limousine.

Lord Devlin said, "there is not a clue, not a thread of evidence (in the Warren Report) to show who others in a conspiracy might have been. What good would it do to reopen the whole case?

The inquiry featured the world premier of the film version of Mark Lane's controversial book, "Rush to Judgment" in which he attempted to prove Oswald was part of a conspiracy.

The film also sought to prove the late Jack Ruby was an agent of the Dallas police department, that at least eight key witnesses had died mysteriously and that the Warren Commission had attempted to supress material evidence.

Mr. Bickel concluded there was "no shadow, no scintilla of evidence pointing to a conspiracy." As for Ruby, he said:

"Poor deranged, unstable Ruby — if he was the conspirator, God help the rest of the conspiracy."

Mr. Lane appeared "live" on the program and clashed frequently with moderator Kenneth Harris, a noted BBC newsman who spent some time in the United States interviewing key witnesses and Warren Commission members. Mr. Harris repeatedly cut off Mr. Lane in mid-sentence for not keeping to the point.

"I didn't come 7000 miles for this," Mr. Lane said bitterly at one point.

The film was shown with frequent breaks to permit comments by Philadelphia Dist. Atty. Arlen Specter and Atty. David Belin of Des Moines, Ia.

Both were Warren Commission counselors.

Mr. Belin said he wrote nine times to Mr. Lane offering to rebut arguments in the film.

"I finally got an answer saying none of the distinguished members of the commission had replied, and that Mr. Lane didn't want what he called 'bit part players,' " Mr. Belin said.

Tippit's Widow Marries

DALLAS, Jan. 30 (UPI) — The widow of the policeman slain by presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald has remarried.

Her new husband, Police Lt. Harry Dean Thomas, 44, said he married Mrs. J. D. Tippit Jan. 21.

The new Mrs. Thomas, 42, a quiet-spoken brunet, has three children, two boys and a girl, by her first marriage. Lt. Thomas has four children of his own from a previous marriage.

THE WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS, MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 1967

Commission Report